



JIM BRIDGER

Bear River. After passing through the canyon leading from Cache Valley, he secured his boat to a shrub on the bank near the edge of the stream. Climbing on the southern rim of the canyon, he saw the present Bear River Valley. Also, in the distance, some twenty-five miles to the south, he got a view of a large body of water.

Returning to his boat, he floated downstream to where the river flowed into the Great Salt Lake. After examining its waters, he returned to Sublette's camp in Cache Valley and reported, "The Bear River flows into an arm of the Pacific Ocean. I tasted the water and found it to be very salty. It is surely ocean water."

At various times during the winter of 1824-1825, other trappers gazed upon the waters of the inland sea. Provo's men were massacred by the Indians in the Salt Lake Valley near Ogden City. But the fact that Bridger made his way down the Bear River in a boat, which would have had to be done before the stream froze over in the fall, indicates that Bridger reached the shores of the Great Salt Lake before Provo did.

After weighing all available evidence, it seems definite that James Bridger was the first white man that we positively know to have seen this inland sea.

#### TRAPPING IN UTAH, 1824-1825

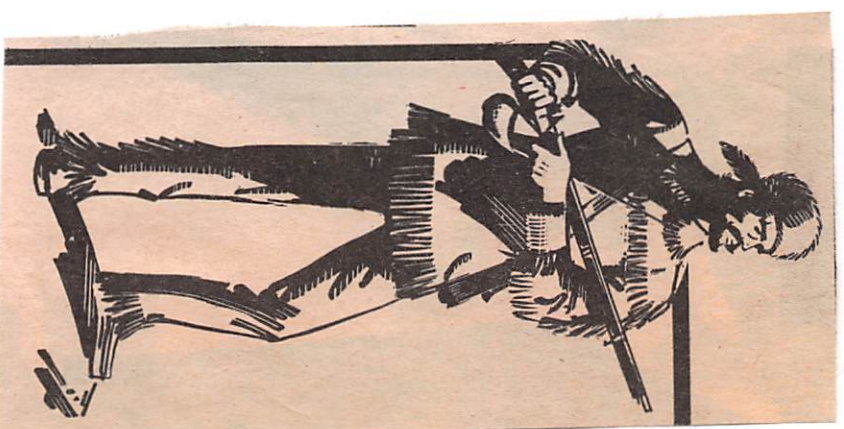
After Bridger returned to Sublette's camp, the group continued trapping to their sources the canyon streams that flow into Cache Valley. The trappers finally settled into winter quarters, probably in some such sheltered place as the mouth of Logan Canyon or Black-



COLONEL BRIDGER.

ed because the trappers cached their furs there, to hide them from the Indians. On Green River, Samuel Brannan rode into camp. He tried in vain to induce the Pioneers to join him in his colony on the Pacific Coast.

the famous Colonel Bridger. He warned them against settling in the Great Basin until it had been shown that grain could be raised there. "Mr. Young," said the Colonel, "I would give a thousand dollars if I knew an ear of corn could ripen in Salt Lake Valley." Major Moses Harris, another mountaineer, advised them to go to Cache Valley, where the land was more productive. Cache Valley was so named

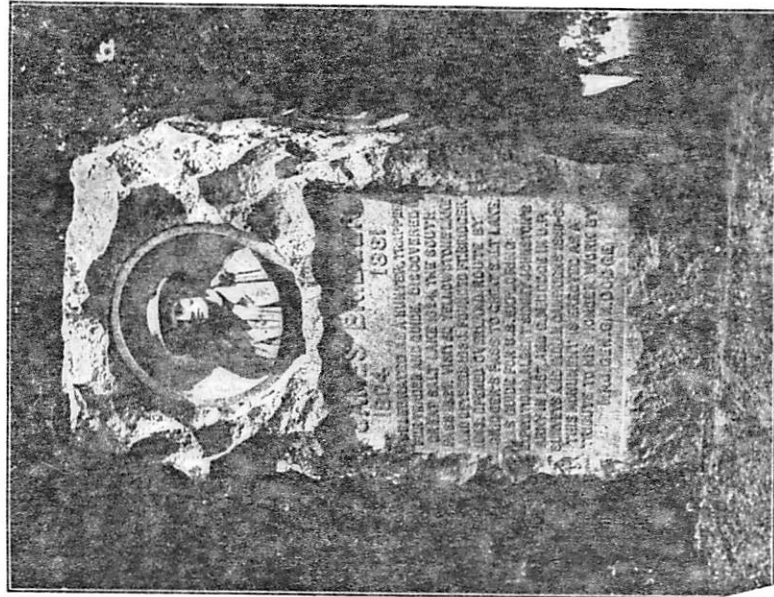


*Fur Trappers helped the Mormon Pioneers—telling them what they faced.*



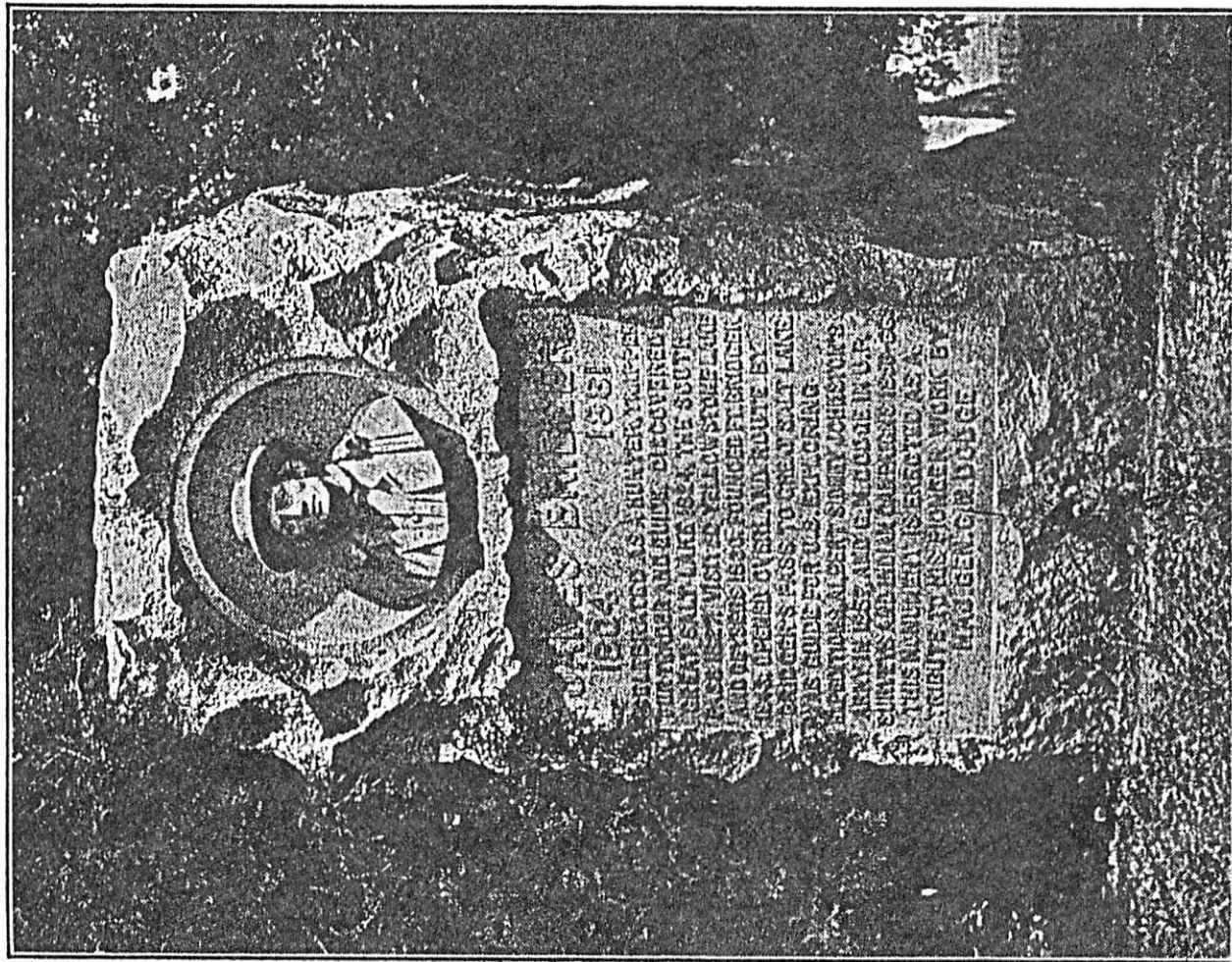
diah Smith, Etienne Provost, William Sublette, Ross Cox, William Henry, "Jim" Bridger, and Kit Carson.

In search of furs and adventure, these hardy explorers



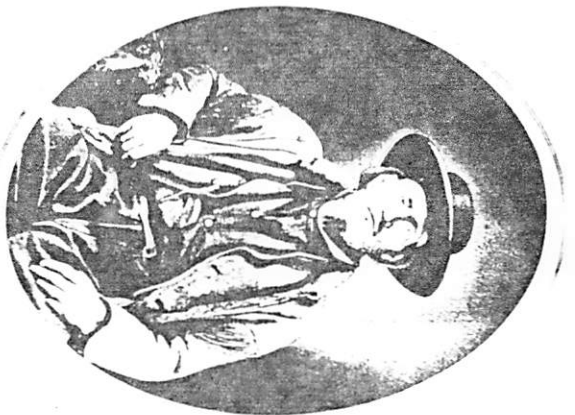
Monument to James Bridger, Discoverer of Great Salt Lake

the Indian trails into the canyons of the Rocky as, and blazing new trails through the canyons, red the Uintals and the Wasatch. Floating their



Monument to James Bridger, Discoverer of Great Salt Lake

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James (Jim) Bridger

UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Kit Carson

Among the early trappers, guides and fort builders who traveled in the Utah area, were Bridger and Carson.



Scouts went ahead to  
ascertain best ways  
to go



Map of Western North America. Drawn in 1795  
p.75



Map of Western North America. Drawn in 1795  
*p. 75*



# Signs attract more visitors

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## New signs draw visitors to Trail Center

OMAHA, NEB.

A new visitors center will soon be completed in what was once the Mormon pioneer community of Winter Quarters in eastern Nebraska, and new freeway signs in the Omaha area directing visitors to the facility should make it easier to find.

The facility is now called the Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters, but with such a long name, the highway signs simply read "Mormon Trail Center," with directions for travel underneath.

Installed June 28 by the states of Iowa and Nebraska and the city of Omaha, the signs were placed on Interstate 80 and 680 in Nebraska and Interstate 29, 80 and 680 in Iowa. The center is located on the north edge of Omaha, just a few blocks south of Interstate 680 at exit 13 (30th Street). This exit is immediately west of Mormon Bridge, which spans the Missouri River, in close proximity to the site of the old ferry crossing used by the pioneers.

Winter Quarters has long been relegated to the pages of history, but from 1846-48, thousands of refugee Mormons trudging across mid-America toward their promised land made their homes here,



Photo by Dell Van Orden

Elder Eldon Fletcher, director of Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters, stands by new sign near temporary visitors center. A new visitors center, with 11,000 square feet of floor space on ground level, is expected to be completed next April.

albeit temporary. But, sadly, hundreds also died here and are buried in the Mormon Pioneer Cemetery adjacent to the

visitors center, which is expected to be completed by next April 1.

A temporary visitors center is current-

ly housed in two trailers across the street. The trailers were placed on the site after an old visitors center was torn down. The cemetery and portions of a pioneer grist mill are the only remains of what was once the bustling city of Winter Quarters, which had some 5,000 residents.

The community was abandoned in 1848 after the Saints went West, but not before harsh, adverse conditions took their toll. The sexton's records indicate 365 people are buried in the cemetery, but it is estimated that another 235 are also buried there, making a total of 600 who lost their lives at Winter Quarters.

Despite adversity, Winter Quarters was not a bleak place. Schools were conducted; socials, theatricals, concerts and dances were commonplace; there was an air of optimism, and at times, gaiety.

Elder Eldon Fletcher, director of the visitors center, said that all the guides serving at the site have reported they have had people on their tours who came because of the freeway signs.

"We're here because of the signs," Elder Fletcher quoted the visitors as saying. Previously there was only one sign in Nebraska and one in Iowa that promoted the pioneer cemetery at Winter Quarters.

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floor and will include the Mormon Trail from Nauvoo to Salt Lake City in the exhibit area. "As you enter the exhibit area, you will see a facade of the Nauvoo Temple," said Elder Fletcher. "As you leave you will see a facade of the Salt Lake Temple."

Also to be included will be a re-creation of William Clayton's camp on Locust Creek in Iowa where he wrote "Come, Come, Ye Saints" and a map of Winter Quarters. A log cabin, wagon and a handcart will also be placed in the center. The handcart has its own story. (See separate article below.) — Dell Van Orden



Photo by Dell Van Orden

Sculpture of pioneer parents burying their infant at Winter Quarters, created by Avard Fairbanks, captures sense of hardships from that era.

## LDS leader visits 5 states in four days

Continued from page 4

That evening, dressed warmly to offset the chill of the night air, President Hinckley was among the estimated 14,000 people who gathered at the base of Hill Cumorah to watch the pageant. The audience spontaneously gave him a standing ovation as he arrived. Officials of the pageant report some 200 referrals expressing interest in learning more about the Church came as a result of the first night's performance.

Before leaving the Palmyra area, President Hinckley and his party arose early on Saturday, July 13, and visited the Sacred Grove.

In his remarks to missionaries, Elder Pinnock said: "The doctrine the Savior spoke about in 3 Ne. 11:21-40 is baptism. He mentions 14 times the importance of baptizing, how to baptize and what happens to an individual who is not baptized.

"Converts are to be baptized! We are to become like Alma and Amulek, as mentioned in Alma 15:3-14. Zeezrom said, 'Yea, I believe all the words that thou has taught.' He trusted them. He had learned that they only spoke the truth and because of that Zeezrom went on to say, 'Yea, I believe according to thy works.' Let us be like them."

To members of the Hill Cumorah Pageant staff, cast and crew, Elder Pinnock said: "You have helped to create memories that will never die. Your dedication and spirit of service will be felt by all who attend. Forty-five years ago, while I was still in high school, my parents brought their three children to visit the Church history sites. The memory of those experiences burns brightly today.

"Be pure, be unselfish by helping each other."

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## Handcart trekker: 'I would do it again, yes'

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camped each day, usually in late afternoon, tables and tents would be set up to sell commemoratives of the trek.

Townpeople would come to the camp to look over the items and visit with the participants. The local townfolks would feed the participants supper and then usually some entertainment would be provided, like the blue grass music or square dancing.

"But it has also been such a spiritual experience," continued Brother Seely, who is activities chairman in the Castle Dale Ward and historical clerk in the Castle Dale Utah Stake. "It has made me personally acquainted with my ancestors without having met them in person. Some of the time we were following the exact tracks the pioneers followed. I now have a greater appreciation for them."

Brother Seely referred to the scripture in Malachi (Mal. 4:5-6), "Behold, I will come and will bring with me the sun of righteousness, and healing shall be in the name of the Lord."

Mike Foley, wagon train director from Montrose, Iowa, said, "We had as many as 40 wagons that participated at one time or another, and we had 107 walkers who pulled or pushed handcarts at some point in the trek."

Even though the handcart people had to be physically fit to be able to walk across the state, "you had to have a mental toughness too," said Brother Seely. "You had to have a drive. Our drive was that we were going to see the state of Iowa."

teen-year-old Janell.

Others walking the entire distance were Kent and Taylor Hurst, a father and son, members from Indianapolis, Ind.

Brother Seely said the handcart group averaged about 20 miles a day. They traveled every day except Sunday. The usual routine was to be in bed by 10 p.m. after all the visitors had left. They would get up at 5 a.m. and be on the trail by 6 a.m. However on several days to avoid the heat, they would start later.





*Photo by Dell Van Orden*  
Sculpture of pioneer parents burying their infant at Winter Quarters, created by Avard Fairbanks, captures sense of hardships from that era.